

The Capital Budget Committee held a meeting at 6:00pm on Tuesday, August 24, 2021 over Zoom.

The following members were present:

Edward J. Forsberg (Chair)	Justin Haner
Josette Burke (Secretary)	Leah McGill
Cheryl Caron	

The following members were absent:

Noreen Gordon	Scott Wassel
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Also in attendance were Assistant Town Administrator Patrick Shield, Finance Director/Town Accountant Jodi Cuneo, Information Technology Director Michael Donovan, Recreation Director Brendan Croak, 300th Anniversary Committee member Bill Buckley, and Community/Economic Development Director Patrick Deschenes.

The meeting was called to order by Edward J. Forsberg at 6:02PM

Committee Reorganization

MOTION MADE by Cheryl Caron to nominate Edward J. Forsberg to Chair. Seconded by Josette Burke. (4-0-1) (*Edward J. Forsberg abstained*)

MOTION MADE by Edward J. Forsberg to nominate Josette Burke to Secretary. Seconded by Cheryl Caron. (4-0-1) (*Josette Burke abstained*)

Capital Budget Overview and Update from Town Administration

Patrick Shield presented a brief overview of the proposed capital budget appropriations. In total, the departments requested \$16.4 million in capital budget projects, while the Town Administrator recommended approximately \$15.2 million.

General Government Requests

Retirement System Assessment Study: The Select Board requested **\$50,000** for a retirement system assessment study, which would affect every full-time municipal employee. The study would be in response to a citizen's petition proposing the transfer of the town's pension contributions from Norfolk County's retirement system to the state's. The select board recommends an examination into the legality and potential effects of such a move.

-Justin Haner asked how the board arrived at the \$50,000 figure if there was no bid, and Patrick Shield clarified that the number was simply an educated estimate based on similar studies.

-Edward J. Forsberg inquired more on the details of the study and Patrick Shield specified that the subject of the study would be legal logistics and investment returns.

-Justin Haner asked which employees would be affected, and Patrick answered with every municipal employee that contributes to the retirement plan (not teachers, police, or part-time employees).

-Edward J. Forsberg asked if there would be a penalty involved in withdrawing from the Norfolk County Retirement fund, and Leah McGuill speculated that the penalty could be avoided if the switch was a rollover. Patrick Shield reiterated that much of the logistics matter are still unknown and the purpose of the study would be to discover answers. It would also not need to be the full cost if it is determined early in the process that it isn't worth it.

NLC REAL Equity and Diversity Training: The Select Board also requested \$15,000 for the National League of Cities' Race Equity and Leadership (REAL) Training. This one-year short-term engagement package would teach municipalities strategies best handle issues related to racial inequity in the workplace. The modules would be remote and likely mandatory for department heads. Patrick Shield has taken an abbreviated version and attests that it would be helpful and beneficial. Leah McGuill spoke to how prevalent these types of trainings are currently in the private sector, and Justin Haner also expressed interest in investing in this matter.

Financial Software Upgrade: Finance Director / Town Accountant Jodi Cuneo joined the discussion to present the Finance Department's request for \$11,000 to upgrade from MUNIS V11.3, the computer software used by the department, to Tyler Hub V2019. The current software will be obsolete starting next year, and the requested funds would include training for the new version. IT Director Michael Donovan joined to affirm that Tyler Hub 2019 would increase efficiency and would be in-house (not cloud-based). The \$11,000 would cover the first year of maintenance and more money would need to be budgeted into the maintenance contract moving forward.

Replacement of Aging Network: IT Director Michael Donovan then presented his department's request for \$50,000 to replace the fiber-optics network the town invested in back in 2008. The current network helps connect many people and runs essential programs within Police, Fire, Water, Sewer, Finance Departments, but an upgrade is needed. Technology has improved immensely in the last 12 years. The schools already made the upgrade two years ago, and these requested funds would cover the entirety of the municipal side.

Pool Sanitation System Replacement: Recreation Director Brendan Croak presented his department's request for \$18,500 to replace the currently outdated chlorinators at the town's various aquatics

facilities. The chlorinators keep the pools sanitized, but they are currently five years old and are in need of an upgrade.

Strategic Plan/Feasibility Study: Brendan Croak's second request is \$50,000 for a study to identify areas of improvement for the recreation department and/or infrastructure. Plans may include looking into a design for a potential new pool (as the Center's current pool is 100 years old) and other additional programming.

Down Payment for Anniversary 2024: Bill Buckley from the 300th Anniversary Committee joined to present his request for \$50,000 for a down payment on the upcoming 300th Anniversary celebrations scheduled for 2024. Specific plans are still undetermined at the moment.

Public Parking Signage: Community/Economic Development joined to present his department's request for \$10,000 to pay for more public parking signs along the downtown Bay Circuit Trail.

The Capital Budget Committee adjourned at 7:10pm.